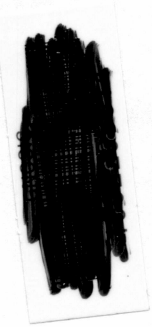

"A WOMAN IS EITHER A LADY OR NOT": THE INFLUENCE OF MOTHERS ON DAUGHTERS IN WILLIAM FAULKNER'S *AS I LAYING DYING* AND *THE SOUND AND THE FURY*

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A

THESIS

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By

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ABSTRACT

William Faulkner, in *As I Lay Dying* and *The Sound and the Fury*, illustrates the relationship between parents and children within a disintegrating social structure. Not only does the father pass his misogynistic views onto his sons and daughters, but the mother also acts as an agent, perpetuating patriarchal order. Although Addie Bundren discovers that her identity is not defined in male terms, she fails to educate her daughter, Dewey Dell. Rather than struggle against her environment, Addie chooses to die, leaving Dewey Dell alone with her father and brothers. Caroline Compson preserves the patriarchal structures within her life by submitting to her father's definition of women. She then teaches this rigid view to Caddy and little Quentin. Through these failed mother and daughter relationships, Faulkner illustrates how families in the South are destroyed from within.

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I. Introduction

In many of his novels, William Faulkner's sympathies lie with the children rather than with his parental characters. In *Absalom, Absalom!*, Henry, Judith, and Ellen are victims of Thomas Sutpen's control, subjected to his temper and domination. As Jason Compson tells his son Quentin about Sutpen, he imposes his misogynistic views on him. In *The Sound and the Fury*, which occurs chronologically after *Absalom, Absalom!*, Quentin commits suicide because of the uncaring and misogynistic attitudes held by his father and mother.

In discussing Faulkner's youthful female characters, many critics, including Gladys Milliner, Cleanth Brooks, Andre Bleikasten, Max Putzel, and Christopher LaLonde, focus, not on Caddy, Addie, or Dewey Dell, but on these women's influences on their brothers' or husbands' lives. Much of the criticism of *As I Lay Dying* and *The Sound and the Fury* revolves around the effect Faulkner's female characters have on his male characters. In other words, the men's decisions can be deciphered by looking at their reactions to women. Caddy, Caroline Compson, Addie, and Dewey Dell are not seen as full characters; they are viewed

as symbols. Patrick Samway states that "As he did with Caddy Compson, and a host of other women, Faulkner does not allow Addie to disappear; she is kept present by a subtle congeries and dynamic interplay of words and images" (285). Bleikasten also sees Caddy's character as an "image" (76); he believes Faulkner wants us to concentrate on the other characters' reactions to Caddy. Michael Millgate writes that Quentin is a tragic figure; however, he does not say the same about Caddy. Likewise, Douglas B. Hill, Jr. states that the adult Caddy is not tragic, but romantic: "in Faulkner's notions of female sexuality we can see [that Caddy's character] lacks the originality and the stature -- and the possibility for tragic depth -- of the portrait of her as a child" (90). Faulkner's female characters have been quickly dismissed as secondary.

In the past ten years, there has been a shift in criticism on Faulkner's female characters, many of whom are regarded as vital, central characters. Sally R. Page, Catherine B. Baum, and Amy Louise Wood regard the women in *As I Lay Dying* and *The Sound and the Fury* as necessary to Faulkner's purposes. Page and Wood believe motherhood is the primary theme in these novels. Page writes, "The thematic meaning of *The Sound and the Fury* is grounded in

man's need of the emotional and oral order which is created by motherly devotion" (50). Rather than only examining the male characters' behavior and ideas in the novel, critics are now taking Faulkner's female characters seriously.

Faulkner illustrates the abuse that exists in the family structure during antebellum South. Many of his male characters, such as Sutpen and Jason Compson, are selfish, abusive men, who pass their views onto their children. I believe Faulkner's female characters also pass these patriarchal views to their daughters. In this thesis I will analyze mother and daughter relationships in *As I Lay Dying* and *The Sound and the Fury* in order to understand how Faulkner portrays a generation's corruption through its female characters and what their future holds for them. Women, especially mothers, in Faulkner novels also transfer the misogynistic beliefs held by men to their daughters. Addie does this to Dewey Dell as does Caroline to Caddy. Trapped in a patriarchal structure, these mothers obtain their notions about gender roles from their fathers and to some extent their husbands. By not fighting this patriarchy, the mothers abandon their daughters.

In my first chapter, I will analyze Addie's refusal to care for her daughter, Dewey Dell. Never escaping

patriarchy, Addie lives accordingly to her father's philosophy of life. She never truly tries to break free from patriarchy until the end of her life. Realizing that she defines herself through emotions rather than words, Addie understands that her sense of self resides outside the terms of a male-dominated language. Instead of teaching this discovery to her daughter, Addie decides to shut herself in her room to die. Without a mother, Dewey Dell is left alone to defend herself against her brothers and father's control. Although Dewey Dell struggles to gain control over her body, by the end of the journey, she has failed.

In my second chapter, I will examine Caroline's influence on Caddy and little Quentin. I refer to Dilsey's character only as a possible way for Caddy and Quentin to learn about love. I want to explore only the direct mother and daughter lineage, but I do acknowledge that Dilsey, although not a true Compson, is a type of surrogate mother, giving the children love and understanding. It is evident in *The Sound and the Fury* that Caroline's views on a woman's code of conduct, which have a negative effect on her daughter and granddaughter, derive from misogynistic beliefs held by her father and husband. Caroline enforces

patriarchal control within the Compson household, and Caddy and Quentin are driven into tragic choices, retracing the paths their mothers have taken. Faulkner utilizes these female characters to show that women as well as men may serve to perpetuate patriarchal values in their children.

II. Language, Silence, and Identity in *As I Lay Dying*

Until recently, not many critics have analyzed mother and daughter relationships in William Faulkner's novels, although some have compared and contrasted his maternal figures with his male characters. In the last ten years there has been a new focus on the mother and daughter relationship in Faulkner's works, especially in *The Sound and the Fury* and *As I Lay Dying*. Feminist critics such as Doreen Fowler and Deborah Barker have briefly explored the significance of the mothers' impact on their daughters in Faulkner's work. Sally R. Page, Catherine B. Baum, and Amy Louise Wood have furthered the examination into mother and daughter relationships. They see Caddy, Quentin, or Dewey Dell as hopeful characters, despite the fact that they never can execute their decisions in life or are forced into fleeing, pregnancy, or prostitution. These women represent, I think, despair rather than hope in Faulkner's novels. Faulkner is not sugar-coating their lives, showing us their struggles and pains, then giving them a happy ending; rather he provides us with a mimetic view of women's lives.

In Faulkner's novels, fathers pass down their misogynistic worldview to their sons. This transmission of information from generation to generation is evident in the relationship between Jason and Quentin Compson in *The Sound and the Fury* and Thomas and Henry Sutpen in *Absalom, Absalom!* Faulkner is well aware, however, that women influence future generations also. He writes that many of his female characters "endure" their lot in life, presenting their endurance as a submission, not a progression out of a patriarchal structure. Rather than breaking free of set standards for women, most of his maternal characters only barely cope. They teach their daughters to submit rather than resist. One of the most remarkable and disturbing examples of this pattern in Faulkner's fiction is the relationship between Addie and Dewey Dell Bundren in *As I Lay Dying*.

The novel is fragmented into many short chapters each from the point of view of one character at a time. I will concentrate on Addie's only chapter, spoken from beyond the grave in a sense, and her daughter's chapter immediately after Addie's death, along with some chapters at the end of the novel. The connection between Addie and Dewey Dell Bundren influences the other characters' actions and

decisions. The women are significant in deciding whether or not there is any hope for the Bundrens and for future generations of daughters. Submersed in the same patriarchal world, both Addie and Dewey Dell try to define themselves but have only patriarchal language at their disposal. Rather than helping her daughter break free, Addie struggles to define herself with no thought of Dewey Dell, who is left alone at the end of the novel, isolated inside a patriarchal reality.

Although Addie is alive in the beginning of *As I Lay Dying*, we receive her words and thoughts only after her death. In her chapter, Addie travels through different stages in order to find her identity. She begins with language but finds that words cannot describe her feelings: " . . . I learned that words are no good; that words dont ever fit even what they are trying to say at" (171). Pregnancy, childbirth, and love are named by men; Addie cannot define or name herself in a language that is her own: "When [Cash] was born I knew that motherhood was invented by someone who had to have a word for it because the ones that had the children didn't care whether there was a word for it or not" (171). Addie associates herself with a language that has no specific words, only feelings.

We can consider Addie in the light of Helene Cixous' observations on the female body. Cixous declares that women possess the possibility of claiming their own language by re-claiming their bodies: "Write your self. Your body must be heard" (250). Although Faulkner wrote *As I Lay Dying* decades before Cixous articulated her theory, he portrays Addie as trying to recover her identity by doing precisely this. She cannot give a name, such as "motherhood," to what has happened to her; she understands it only as an emotion or as physical pain. Addie toils with others' classification of her as a mother rather than forging her own identity as a woman.

Through her father, Addie learns that death is the goal of life. His words are a trap, " . . . the reason for living was to get ready to stay dead a long time" (169). Rather than fully rejecting this philosophy, Addie tries to find her own philosophy of life but fails. When working as a schoolteacher, she thinks, "[teaching] seemed to be the only way I could get ready to stay dead" (170). Nonetheless, she recognizes the horror of whipping her students and chooses, instead, to live with Anse, to build a different life. Addie also creates life through birth, and she begins to define herself through her children: "My

children were of me alone, of the wild blood boiling along the earth, of me and of all that lived; of none and of all" (175). Paul S. Nielsen observes that Addie "seems to associate fullness with life and with meaning. In contrast, what is empty seems dead and meaningless" (37). Toward the end of her life, Addie rarely sees herself full or enriched by her children's lives. She views pregnancy only as a function of her duty to Anse, her husband: "I gave Anse the children . . . That was my duty to him . . ." (174). Addie is at odds with herself, trying to reclaim her body. She views herself in conjunction with her children: " . . . because I was three now" (173). She also sees in them a sense of her wifely duty and a violation of her solitude. Cleanth Brooks writes, "Since Addie does not believe in the spiritual . . . She can make the assertion of her identity only in terms of the body. Her body then becomes of inordinate importance to her. . ." (149). By renewing the importance of her body, both sexually and maternally, Addie can unearth a language of her own. She learns that a language does exist outside of the language created by men.

Although Addie views Anse as metaphorically dead and her children as a duty towards her husband, she longs to be

seen as a sexual woman rather than only as a mother: "I would think: The shape of my body where I used to be a virgin is in the shape of a and I couldn't think *Anse* . . ." (173). Addie does not associate her sexuality with her husband, but rather as a blank, perhaps an emotion that cannot be defined with a word. Amy Louise Wood views Addie's self-definition as an affirmation of femininity:

> By merging her motherhood and sexuality together as a mode of self-expression, Addie transcends societal expectations of femininity. Yet by having her find meaning in her life through her body, Faulkner is reaffirming cultural notions of femininity. (100)

In other words, Addie is at least trying to escape her father's words by redefining herself, which seems to suggest that she is searching for a way to affirm her womanhood. However, Wood fails to see that in Addie's struggle to define herself in connection with her sexuality or body, Addie perpetuates the patriarchal definition of women as child-bearers.

Although Addie does experiment with breaking away from male-dominated structures, at the end of her life I believe she returns to patriarchy. Many critics, such as Wood,

Fowler, and Nielsen, read Addie's primary rejection of her father's words as an affirmation of womanhood. Although this may appear to be an affirmation at first, Addie returns to planning her life in such a way as to seek revenge after her death: ". . . my revenge would be that he would never know I was taking revenge" (173). Addie's revenge is the journey her family will need to take in order to satisfy her last wish, which is to be buried in Jefferson. In making this request and "getting ready to clean my house" (176), which signifies her preparation for death, I believe Addie is indeed "ready[ing herself] to stay dead a long time." Furthermore, she wants to be buried in Jefferson with her people, that is her father since her mother is never mentioned in the text. Although we may read this as a feminist affirmation in that it is a rejection of her husband, Addie is returning to her father, entrapping herself within a patriarchal structure. Thus, she re-establishes her father's words rather than renouncing them.

Addie retains a strong bond with one child in particular, Jewel, who is the child from her affair with Whitfield. Addie tells Cora that although Jewel behaves indifferently to her, "He is my cross and he will be my

salvation. He will save me from the water and from the fire. Even though I have laid down my life, he will save me" (168). Her affair with Whitfield assumes a certain religious significance. Whitfield and Addie both describe their affair as sinful, but they handle the sin differently. Planning to bear this sin and its consequence, Jewel, Addie promises never to tell her husband: "I know my own sin. I know that I deserve my punishment. I do not begrudge it" (167). Whitfield, on the other hand, cannot live any longer without Anse's forgiveness. He emphasizes several times that he must tell Anse about the affair before Addie because if she admits to the affair, she commits two sins. Whitfield is rather selfish in this respect; oblivious of Addie, he considers only his own soul. When he arrives at the Bundren's, Addie is already dead. Although he never tells Anse about the affair, Whitfield believes he has already been forgiven because he has admitted his sin out loud. Addie, Whitfield believes, is doomed: "her soul faced the awful and irrevocable judgment" (179). Whitfield passes judgment on Addie. Before he learns of her death, the sin is both of theirs; after her death, he places the blame solely on Addie. Whitfield traps Addie within his reality. She does

not bear only her part of the sin, Jewel, but she also has to carry Whitfield's burden of sin after her death.

Addie does not mention her relationship with Dewey Dell; she only analyzes and defines herself through her relationships with Cash, Darl, and Jewel: "And now [Anse] has three children that are his and not mine. And then I could get ready to die" (176). This also is evidence of Addie's return to her father's philosophy; she is preparing her life for death. In doing so, she separates herself from the children she does not see as part of her, especially Dewey Dell.

Addie abandons her daughter Dewey Dell to the oppressive structure of a patriarchal society. Throughout her narrative, Addie never mentions her love for Dewey Dell or reflects on her pregnancy with her daughter. If, as Nielsen believes, Addie's story is a "narrative of pregnancies" (37), then Dewey Dell is omitted from Addie's life story. In fact, Addie relinquishes Dewey Dell to Anse: "I gave Anse Dewey Dell to negative Jewel" (176). In relinquishing Dewey Dell to the patriarchy, Addie illustrates Julia Kristeva's observations that "the *desire* for motherhood is without fail a desire to bear a child of the father (a child of her own father) . . ." (239). In

keeping with this idea, Addie remains subject to patriarchal society throughout the ordeal of childbirth. She realizes that she could use her experience of childbirth to break free of patriarchal control because motherhood produces a split in her identity. She views her body as sexual, in shapes and hollows. Dewey Dell, on the other hand, does not see her body in these terms. Regarding the pregnancy as a hindrance, she desires to abort her child, separating herself from motherhood. Unlike her mother, Dewey Dell struggles to deny childbirth as part of her identity, never accepting her pregnancy as an actual baby of her own. She desires to abort Lafe's baby, but she attains no help and so is unable to rid her body of "the other."

Kristeva views motherhood as a means for women to go beyond their own bodies, a productive splitting (238). Addie actually accomplishes this, defining herself as "three," regarding Jewel and Cash as part of her identity. Nonetheless, she is rather selfish as a mother, rejecting Darl, Vardaman, and Dewey Dell as her children and hence as part of her identity. She also refuses to extend her motherly duty beyond necessity: "I just refused, just as I refused my breast to Cash and Darl after their time was up

. . ." (175). She denies two of her children sustenance (milk) and does not even mention whether or not she provided for her other three children. Her revenge, in requiring that her family carrying her coffin and body to Jefferson, also places burdens on all of her children, not only Anse.

Faulkner not only shows Addie trapped inside patriarchal language, but also illustrates the effect her decisions have on her daughter. Addie's death leaves Dewey Dell stranded in a patriarchal order without any means to disassociate herself from her father's and brothers' language: "I heard that my mother is dead. I wish I had time to let her die. I wish I had time to wish I had. It is because in the wild and outraged earth too soon too soon too soon" (120). Dewey Dell wishes that her pregnancy and her mother's death would wait, allow her more time; she is not ready to become one with the earth as described by her mother. Her mother has abandoned Dewey Dell to the patriarchy by not teaching her what she herself had discovered about language and sexuality, that a language exists other than the officially sanctioned one. Although Addie struggles with patriarchal terms and begins to break free from them, Dewey Dell has no access to language. In

other words, she does not define herself inside or outside of the language. Christopher A. LaLonde believes that throughout the novel, Anse and Dewey Dell think similarly: ". . . Anse and Dewey Dell attempt to appropriate the rite [the journey with Addie's body] for illegitimate ends" (79). In giving Dewey Dell to Anse, Addie is requiring her daughter to learn from him, as Addie did from her father. Through the estranged relationship between mother and daughter, Faulkner shows a discontinuity in the learning process. Dewey Dell does not learn what her mother knows, and, hence, she cannot progress.

Like Addie, Dewey Dell identifies herself with her body. Yet, unlike Addie, she wants to defy the patriarchal order by obtaining an abortion, thus evading the standard equation of the feminine with the maternal. In fact, Addie and Dewey Dell act in accordance with Kristeva's assertion that childbirth consists of a "symbolic paternal facet," which is the woman's desire to have her father's child, an "object" (239). However, Kristeva also affirms the existence of another side of motherhood, observing that the "homosexual maternal facet" is an emotion, not an object: "By giving birth, the woman enters into contact with her mother; she becomes, she is her own mother; they are the

same continuity differentiating itself" (239). With the symbolic paternal facet, as soon as the mother has the child or object, her birthing emotions change into "melancholy" because the object "becomes a gift to others, neither self nor part of the self . . ." (239). Dewey Dell's desire to abort the baby presents itself as an act in defiance of the paternal order in which she lives. Faulkner introduces the issue of abortion to suggest that the cycle of subjection in which one generation repeats the mistakes of the last can be stopped. If the abortion were possible, Dewey Dell might not perpetuate the dysfunctional relationship between mother and child within the patriarchal structure, but she would also lose her identify as a mother, that is to say, the homosexual maternal facet. Like Kristeva, Cixous also believes women are connected to each other through childbirth: "It is necessary and sufficient that the best of herself be given to woman by another woman for her to be able to love herself and return in love the body that was 'born' to her" (252). Dewey Dell cannot make this woman-to-woman connection, however, precisely because Addie has forsaken her by giving her to Anse and by not teaching her that which her father cannot teach her.

All of Dewey Dell's attempts to identify herself outside of the masculine language are interrupted by male intrusions. This is evident in Dewey Dell's masturbation scene. The cow may symbolize the mother, especially the lack of a mother, in the novel. Although critics have analyzed the bovine image in *As I Lay Dying*, only Wood has mentioned that the cow is maternal. But she does not explain the role of the cow with respect to Dewey Dell or her sexuality. Most critics assess the cow only as an initial association in the masturbation scene. However, I believe the cow symbolizes an awareness that breaks involuntarily into Dewey Dell's consciousness, helping her discover the independence of sexuality from motherhood, pregnancy, and men.

During her life, Addie did not teach Dewey Dell what she unearthed for herself: a woman's body can be defined as sexual and maternal beyond the terms of male-dominated language. Dewey Dell begins to learn this through masturbation. As the cow breathes on Dewey Dell, "She nuzzles me, snuffing, blowing her breath in a sweet, hot blast, through my dress, against my hot nakedness, moaning" (61). At this point, she experiences the beginning of a sexual awakening. Struggling to name what she is feeling,

Dewey Dell can only use patriarchal language to describe it: "I listen to it saying for a long time before it can say the word and the listening part is afraid that there may not be time to say it" (61). She cannot name her feelings. Immediately following this search for words, Dewey Dell begins to feel her body's "bones and flesh beginning to part and open upon the alone" (61). The cow initiates the sexual awakening. Alone, Dewey Dell has no man to arouse her. She seems dimly aware that her sexuality is separate from her pregnancy and from men. However, the only word Dewey Dell utters during the masturbation scene is the name of her baby's father: "Lafe. Lafe. 'Lafe.' Lafe. Lafe" (62). Returning once again to the masculine language, she expresses her sexuality in language as a male's name.

After Dewey Dell calls Lafe's name, the cow's breath again interrupts: "I begin to rush upon the darkness but the cow stops me and the darkness rushes on upon the sweet blast of her moaning breath, filled with wood and with silence" (62). Now, Dewey Dell has no words for what she feels; her sexuality stems from something external, not Lafe. In a sense, the cow accompanies Dewey Dell as she achieves orgasm; there is no language now, only silence.

Once more, Dewey Dell avoids patriarchal association, but she does not escape it entirely. That the cow's breath is "filled with wood" suggests heterosexual contact because in *As I Lay Dying*, both Addie and Dewey Dell disappear into the woods to become impregnated by men. Yet, the cow - a maternal figure - emits this wooded scent, which seems to present sexuality as an experience transcending the structure of male-dominated society.

It is a male character who interrupts Dewey Dell's solitude, preventing her from achieving climax. Vardaman, the littlest brother, watches Dewey Dell from the corner of the stall. With her discovery of Vardaman, "the last of rushing darkness flees whistling away" (62). A woman's experiment with self-discovery and self-pleasure unaided by a man is halted. The masturbation scene is the first experience that enables Dewey Dell to identify herself as a person, a woman. Yet, she is not alone even in this scene of sexual self-discovery. The importance of this interruption is illuminated by Cixous' claim that "A woman without a body, dumb, blind, can't possibly be a good fighter. She is reduced to being the servant of the militant male, his shadow" (250). Dewey Dell's sexuality is suppressed by a male presence; she cannot take control

of her own body or sexuality, and so becomes her brother's "shadow."

Nonetheless, Dewey Dell does independently reject the maternal cow. Several times, she refuses to milk the cow, although the cow bellows at Dewey Dell. Cixous writes that "a woman is never far from 'mother' . . . There is always within her at least a little of that good mother's milk. She writes in white ink" (251), meaning that motherhood can be a source of creativity. When Dewey Dell rejects the "white ink" or milk by refusing to milk the cow, she turns away from the "mother." In a sense, Dewey Dell rejects the corporal component of a woman's identity.

Before Dewey Dell's exploration of her own sensuality through masturbation, Dewey Dell associates her body with men: "I am a little tub of guts" (58) and ". . . I am Lafe's guts" (60). Yasuko Idei observes that "Dewey Dell's be-verbs are always attached to I or he (Lafe) . . ." (37). Although Idei does not make this point, Dewey Dell's words, "Lafe's guts," illustrate her attachment to patriarchal language. Through the words she uses, Dewey Dell identifies herself with Lafe or Lafe's baby and associates herself with the masculine. Because Dewey Dell fails to come to an orgasm by auto-eroticism, she continues to

define herself in patriarchal terms, the only language she has experienced: "I feel like a wet seed wild in the hot blind earth" (64). Rather than defining herself as the customary feminine part of the analogy, the earth, as her mother has, Dewey Dell associates herself with the masculine "seed," which impregnates the earth. This is consistent with Cixous' observations that, "Censor the body and you censor breath and speech at the same time" (250). Because she cannot obtain an abortion or experience pleasure in her own body, Dewey Dell is unable to voice her desires and needs to anyone. She cannot discuss her pregnancy or her body with any man inside or outside her family. She has no control over her own body. Her father, lover, and brothers control her body and her sexuality.

Dewey Dell's quest for an abortion during her mother's funeral journey does suggest that she is determined to find another way to characterize herself. Her determination to rid her body of Lafe's child illustrates that she does not desire to repeat Addie's life. But the separation Dewey Dell desires is impossible because men hinder her from obtaining an abortion or discovering her sexuality. Faulkner writes his female characters as having the ability to make choices for themselves. He also not only realizes

that men do not allow women to execute these choices, but that other women can fortuitously act as agents of that control. In *As I Lay Dying*, Faulkner shows the ways men control women's lives. Although Dewey Dell's intentions are clear, she is thwarted in every attempt to control her destiny. Many critics, such as Robert Reed Sanderlin, LaLonde, and Wood, observe that Dewey Dell is passive throughout the novel. Although Wood is more affirmative in saying that Dewey Dell is at least not "passionless" (109), most critics think she merely consents to the desires of others.

I believe Dewey Dell is not entirely passive; Faulkner portrays her as trying to make choices only to be impeded by men. The first druggist, Moseley, propounds the myth that a man can solve a woman's problems, and that marriage, a husband, or her father and brothers will help Dewey Dell more than an abortion: "And I'd advise you to buy that [nipple] and go back home and tell your pa, if you have one, and let him make somebody buy you a wedding license" (201). Dewey Dell already understands that Lafe will not marry her because he is the man who gave her the ten dollars for the abortion. Moseley is also oblivious of the fact that Dewey Dell has lost her mother: "Where's your

ma? . . . Haven't you got one? . . . Why not talk to her about it before you take any medicine" (200). Addie did not teach her daughter about sexuality when she was alive, and now that she is dead, her daughter cannot learn from her either. Faulkner shows that in life and in death, the mother's denial of her daughter's needs perpetuates the cycle of female subjection. Skeet MacGowan, the second "druggist," says he has a drug that will cause an abortion, but he only takes advantage of Dewey Dell by assaulting her. Again, the maternal cow appears, not to Dewey Dell, but to Vardaman: "[The cow] goes across the square, her head down clopping . She lows . . . Now it is empty after she lowed . . . She lows" (251). The cow lows while Dewey Dell is raped, but she cannot hear the cow because a man is abusing her.

The last man who dashes Dewey Dell's hope is her father. Anse, pretending that it is only a "loan" (256), demands that she give him Lafe's ten dollars. Ironically, the money is not hers to give because it belongs to Lafe. All her life, Dewey Dell is always at the mercy of men. Patriarchy denies her any hope for an abortion, and therefore any chance to live differently from her mother,

who married in order to escape her father and who identified herself with two of her male children.

Some critics do not think that Dewey Dell repeats Addie's life and struggle with patriarchal control. Wood believes that the last image of Dewey Dell, on top of the wagon eating bananas, "emerg[es] as the representation of maternal culture" (111). Fowler also sees Dewey Dell's thwarted abortion as a recreation of motherhood (115). I do not see anything affirming in the last scene of the novel. Although Dewey Dell's pregnancy will bring a new body to the Bundren family, she does not welcome this pregnancy; she wants an abortion and resorts to manipulating her mother's funeral march as means to an end that never can happen. While Dewey Dell appears to be the only Bundren who remains sane, she is stuck within a society dominated by male insanity. Unless she marries out of the family, which only forces her to return to the patriarchal order, her child will grow up in a broken, dysfunctional male-dominated society.

Because Addie deprives Dewey Dell of what she discovers about a woman's body and what she knows about patriarchal oppression, Dewey Dell will repeat Addie's struggle - the splitting of her identity - especially

through childbirth, dependence on her husband, and the denial of her body. No progress is being made to break through patriarchy. Dewey Dell's daughter would not learn how to express her identity within patriarchal structures or how to subvert patriarchal control. Dewey Dell will teach the language inside of which she is trapped. Thus, Faulkner has illustrated that patriarchal domination and patriarchal language are patterns perpetuated by women, as well as men, through several female generations.

III. Classification and Identity in *The Sound and the Fury*

The deterioration of the Compson family occurs partly because of the misogynistic beliefs passed on from the father, Jason, to his boys, Quentin and Jason. Jason believes women are selfish whores: "[women are a] Delicate equilibrium of periodical filth between two moons balanced. Moons he said full and yellow as harvest moons her hips thighs" (128). Jason imparts this information to his sons, who obtain a skewed view of women, especially of their sister and mother.

Most critics concentrate on the damage that the fathers' misogynistic beliefs have on their sons in Faulkner's novels. In *The Sound and the Fury*, the usual emphasis is on the three sons' reactions to their father and mother. Caddy is often regarded as a catalyst for the brothers' downfall or as a virgin/whore figure. Gladys Milliner believes Caddy is a "third Eve," who contains the characteristics of a "temptress, sinner, and mother of men" as well as remaining a "virgin, sinless and mother of the Redeemer of men" (268). She notes that Caddy's character is vaguely drawn. Andre Bleikasten agrees, "Caddy is just

a name, or the deceptive echo of a name" (76). He claims that for Faulkner, Caddy's character is only a means to indicate time shifts in the novel, especially in the first section. Although many critics, including Cleanth Brooks and David Minter, agree that Jason senior and Caroline play a significant role in the downfall of their children's lives, they fail to appreciate the way Caroline's views on women affect Caddy, and later little Quentin.

Through their failure to break free, the Compson women play a significant part in the downfall of their family. In their household, a heavy patriarchal rule is enforced by the father and then by his son, Jason. Yet, Caroline Compson exerts considerable power in the Compson household. Although she remains upstairs in her room bemoaning her weakness and sickness, she actually has a lot of influence over her children. Like Addie Bundren, Caroline withholds her love from all of her children except one, Jason, who, she says, is not really a Compson, but a Bascomb: "Jason [senior] you must let me go away I cannot stand it let me have Jason [son] and you keep the others they're not my flesh and blood like he is strangers nothing of mine and I am afraid of them" (104). The lack of motherly love affects all of her children: Benjy is habitually

neglected, Quentin commits suicide, and Jason is exceedingly cruel. Caroline's failure as a mother damages her daughter, Caddy, and the ramifications of the mother's passive aggression continue into the next generation with Caddy's daughter, Quentin. As mothers, both Caroline and Caddy fail to help their daughters find their own identities within the patriarchal household. Although they live and strive for self-definition within the system, Caroline and Caddy support its rule by abandoning their daughters to the male-dominated order.

Our view of the Compson women's lives is biased because they never have a voice in the narrative. Several critics discuss this problem. Hill, Jr. states that "[Caddy] is for the reader, for more than three quarters of the book, whatever Benjy, Quentin, or Jason seem to make her out to be. This is her subjective existence within the novel, her existence in their three minds" (85). Yet, critics such as Catherine B. Baum, Sally R. Page, and Charles Chappell believe we receive a fair portrayal of Caroline and Caddy because we are provided with exact conversations and detailed descriptions. Baum explains that although Caddy never speaks for herself, the sections actually record Caddy's life from childhood and adolescence

to maturity (34). Readers are able to connect each narrator's view of Caddy into an image of her character. Faulkner may have purposely omitted Caddy as a narrative voice in order to represent the repression of women's speech in the novel.

Although Caroline and Caddy seem to be only minor characters in the novel, both represent the larger theme of problematic mother and daughter relationships in Faulkner's works. Like Addie and Dewey Dell Bundren in *As I Lay Dying*, Caroline and Caddy demonstrate the way women tend to betray each other in patriarchal society. Though we understand Caroline and Caddy only through the perception of the male children, Benjy, Quentin, and Jason, we do receive a rather clear picture of the two women, enough to interpret their motives. Faulkner's presentation of his female characters in *The Sound and the Fury* resembles his presentation of Addie Bundren in *As I Lay Dying* because they are all seen through the impressions of his male characters. Faulkner repeats the struggles of his female characters within their suffocating environments: his women live in male-dominated families, where they view their lives as obligations to men and children.

Caroline Compson's circumstances are similar to Addie Bundren's. Both women reject their husbands' households: Addie closes herself inside her room to die, and Caroline refuses to acknowledge that her last name is no longer Bascomb. Caroline does not recognize that she and her husband have a new family, and she does not participate in the family as a mother. In the fourth section of the novel, Caroline rarely leaves her bedroom, dictating orders to Dilsey who manages the duties of the household, such as caring for Benjy and Quentin, cooking, and cleaning. Brooks describes Caroline Compson as a "mother who lacks maternal feeling" (49). Like Addie, Caroline rejects most of her children. She fails to see that Benjy needs to be treated differently from the other children. Caroline's repudiation of Caddy is similar to Addie's rejection of her daughter, Dewey Dell. Both mothers abandon their daughters, who in turn must fend for themselves within a male-dominated family. Furthermore, most of her interaction with her children consists of whining about the difficulties of her life and the hardships her children force on her.

Caroline presides over the Compson household, creating an atmosphere that stifles her children's growth.

Everyone, Jason, Uncle Maury, Dilsey, and the children, struggles to please Caroline or to pacify her. Quentin does not even believe he has a mother: *"If I could say Mother. Mother"* (95) and later: *"if I'd just had a mother so I could say Mother Mother"* (172). Noel Polk observes that Quentin refers to his mother as a jailer: "From [Caroline's] pocket [Jason] tugged a huge bunch of rusted keys on an iron ring like a mediaeval jailer's . . ." (281). In fact, she becomes the jailer for all of her children. Polk states that

> It is thus in fact that the whining, self-centered, repressive Caroline Compson presides over the Compson household, making of the house itself a prison, the grounds a fenced compound, which can be escaped only by dying or by climbing through the curtained window. (62)

The children then are under this dominance; they must either submit or escape in order to function. The household is heavy with the guilt Caroline imposes on her children. They cannot play, talk, or act inside or outside the house without worrying about their mother. Caroline views Benjy as a "judgment on me" (5) and as a "punishment" (102). She is not sensitive to Benjy's needs and does not

show him love. That job is left to Caddy, who becomes the surrogate mother to all three of her brothers.

Although Jason senior has died, Jason junior carries on the misogynistic views of his father. In addition, Caroline perpetuates the male view of women; she becomes submissive toward her son and demands that Caddy and little Quentin do the same. Because Caroline chooses to live most of her life in her room, her daughter, like Dewey Dell, becomes one of the main female caregivers in the family. She nurtures the other children and mothers Benjy throughout her years of living in the Compson house. Michael Millgate writes that "In the Benjy section, we recognize Caddy as the principal sustainer of such family unity as survives . . . as the protector and comforter of Benjy, and even as the pacifier of her mother . . ." (97). Caddy is Benjy's world. She teaches Benjy what cold is, protects him when the children play, and talks baby talk to him: "Santy Claus, Benjy. Santy Claus" (7). She also vigilantly protects him when Jason destroys his paper dolls, and she sleeps next to him in order to pacify him when he is upset. A clear example of Caroline's delegation of the mother-role to Caddy occurs when Caddy is a very young girl. Caddy argues with her mother about coddling

Benjy. When Caroline orders Benjy to come to her bed, she does not understand what Benjy needs and is oblivious to Benjy's way of communicating his concerns. Benjy is upset and moaning; Caroline is demanding that he stop, and Caddy is the only one who recognizes that Benjy wants the cushion (63). As a young child, Caddy has already accepted the role of mother to Benjy. She makes this evident to her mother: "'You dont need to bother with him.' Caddy said. 'I like to take care of him. Dont I. Benjy'" (63). Caroline becomes the child, spending her days, supposedly ill, in bed while Caddy embraces the maternal role.

Caroline abandons her children to her husband Jason, and chooses to surrender herself to her bed without making herself available to her daughter, because of what she has learned as a young woman. Page writes,

> In the bulk of Faulkner's fiction the self-giving love of the mother does symbolize the most ideal way in which man can adjust to the limitations of the human condition, but these mother figures are . . . limited and imperfect human beings. (451)

Because she is limited in her knowledge of marriage and life, Caroline views marrying Jason and loving her children as a duty: "I dont complain I loved [Benjy] above all of

them because of it because my duty though Jason pulling at my heart all the while . . ." (103). Caroline does not embrace her family or her forced role as mother in the family; instead, she considers marriage and motherhood as a curse upon her life. Philip M. Weinstein explains that Caroline does not have access to "her own bodily desires;" thus, "The dungeon is not mother but motherhood" (13). When Caroline was a young woman, maturing in her father's family, she learned that women are placed into one of two categories, ladies or whores: "I was taught that there is no halfway ground that a woman is either a lady or not . . ." (103). This dichotomy has shaped Caroline's treatment of her own daughter, who is not a lady because she sneaks out of the house to meet men and does not tell her mother whom she is dating.

Caroline's influence on her daughter and Caddy's feelings toward her mother shed light on Caddy's expression of her own sexuality. She conceals her boyfriends and sexuality from her mother: "*Why wont you bring him to the house, Caddy? Why must you do like nigger women do in the pasture the ditches the dark woods hot hidden furious in the dark woods*" (92). Caddy is categorized as a "nigger." Caroline does not consider African Americans as women, only

as slaves. Caddy is not a lady because she does not have the "carriage" of a proper woman: "All of our women have prided themselves on their carriage" (63). Evidently, Caroline believes that a woman's posture ought to hide sexuality from society. She identifies herself with a simplistic moral ideal: "I'm a lady" (300). Even before Caddy becomes pregnant, Caroline is trying to find her a husband in order to check her behavior: "she will forget him then all the talk will die away . . . maybe I could find a husband for her" (102). She believes that the community's opinion of Caddy is a reflection on herself and the family. Although Caroline appears weak and fragile, she is not ignorant of Caddy's sexual behavior. Caroline must make the family appear righteous and moral, and they must all maintain their "carriage."

Despite her mother's efforts, Caddy does not fit into this picture. Caroline warns her husband, Jason: "she not only drags your name in the dirt but corrupts the very air your children breathe . . ." (104). At the beginning of Caddy's adolescence, Caroline welcomes the attention Caddy's boyfriends bring the family. Herbert owns an automobile and thus Caddy's association with him reflects a sort of status and glory on the Compson family. Caroline

pities the country people, "poor things," who have never seen an automobile before, even though she herself had never previously seen one either. Furthermore, Caroline adores the attention she receives from Caddy's boyfriends. For example, Herbert showers compliments on Caroline, who believes them:

> Unless I do what I am tempted to and take you instead I dont think Mr Compson could overtake the car. . .
>
> Candace do you hear that . . . You needn't be jealous though it's just an old woman he's flattering a grown married daughter I cant believe it. (95)

What is even more revealing is that Caroline still views herself as a "grown married daughter." She remains her father's daughter, although she has been married for more than fifteen years. The pleasure Caroline takes in Caddy's demeanor quickly changes into trying to control her daughter's behavior. Millgate observes, "[Caddy's] sexual freedom appears as the expression of a natural rebellion against the repressive, contradictory, and essentially self-centered demands made upon her by the different members of her family" (97). Caddy's promiscuity is a

result of her mother's view that women are either pure or not. If her behavior does not reflect what her mother considers "ladylike," then she fails. Caroline holds her daughter to an idealistic standard of what constitutes a woman, and since neither Caddy nor any other reasonable, healthy woman can fit this ideal, she is placed in another category by her mother, "not a lady." Without any real choice, Caddy conforms to her mother's idea of a fallen woman.

Caroline's judgment of Caddy is probably only part of her daughter's motivation. We learn about Caddy's sexual escapades through her brother, Quentin. For him, Caddy is a fallen woman. Quentin obsesses on his incestuous desire for Caddy and on his sister's sexual behavior with other men. Quentin does not want to believe that she would choose to have sexual intercourse with Dalton Ames. In order to possess Caddy for himself, Quentin suggests that they run away together: "did he make you then he made you do it let him he was stronger than you and he tomorrow Ill kill him I swear I will father neednt know until afterward and then you and I nobody need ever know we can take my school money . . ." (150). Above all, Caddy remains innocent in Quentin's mind. He believes that she has not

consented to have sex with Dalton Ames and has no control over her sensuality. Caddy struggles with one man after another, including her brother, for control of her own body, trying to remain in charge. She tells Quentin that she loves Dalton Ames completely and that her reason for losing her virginity is true love: "I would die for him Ive already died for him I die for him over and over again everytime this goes" (151). Unlike Caroline, Caddy at least strives to find love with men, although they take advantage of her innocence.

Just as men hinder Dewey Dell's sexual awakening in *As I Lay Dying*, so Caddy's struggle to explore the world of men around her is inhibited by Benjy, who resents her maturation into womanhood and sensuality. He will not welcome or hug Caddy when she first puts on perfume: "*Benjy, Caddy said, Benjy. She put her arms around me again, but I went away*" (40). Caddy attempts to approach Benjy several times before she realizes that she must wash off the perfume. Furthermore, Benjy interrupts Caddy and Charlie, one of her first lovers, when they are on the swing together. Benjy begins to cry when he sees Caddy and Charlie. In order to comfort and quiet Benjy, Caddy must leave Charlie alone and promise Benjy that she will never

be with another boy again: "'I wont.' she said. 'I wont anymore, ever. Benjy. Benjy.' Then she was crying, and I cried, and we held each other. 'Hush.' she said. 'Hush. I wont anymore'" (48). After this episode, Caddy washes her mouth out with soap (48). She punishes herself for betraying Benjy and possibly herself. Later, Quentin, Caddy's daughter, suffers the very same resistance. However, Quentin behaves rudely toward Benjy; instead of comforting him, she runs to Dilsey in order to complain about Benjy's presence.

As a young woman, Caddy does not understand what she is doing or the consequences of her actions with boys. Baum explains that Caddy's virtues actually contribute to her downfall:

> Ironically enough, those qualities in her character that are admirable are the ones which lead to her fall: her complete selflessness, which leads her to be indifferent to her virginity and to what happens to her; her willingness to put the other person's interests first; and her great desire to communicate love. She is too selfless for the world she is in, because all that the world, in the form of Jason

> and Dalton, knows how to do is take advantage of that selflessness. (38)

When she begins to mature sexually, Caddy seems not to enjoy what she does with other boys. She describes the emotions that compel her to behave sexually with boys as sinister, dark, and secretive: "*There was something terrible in me sometimes at night I could see it grinning at me I could see it through them grinning at me through their faces it's gone now and I'm sick*" (112). She notices that destruction resides in these men she meets. Yet, something in her drives Caddy toward sexuality and men, at least until she becomes a mother. Thereafter, she understands that running away at night to meet these men must stop because she must marry and rear a family of her own.

Now she is forced into her mother's fate: Caddy must marry or be a fallen woman, fitting into one of her mother's categories. She marries because she feels a need to provide a father for her child. However, because she has had many lovers, Caddy is unable to determine who the father of her child actually is. She discusses this problem with Quentin:

Have there been very many Caddy

I dont know too many will you look after Benjy and Father

You dont know whose it is then does he know

Dont touch me will you look after Benjy and Father . . . I've got to marry somebody. (115)

This passage is remarkable in demonstrating that even in the middle of her own hardship, Caddy only considers her maternal role. She understands that someone must take over her responsibility of caring for the family. Without Caddy, there will be no functioning mother in the Compson household.

Although Caddy fulfills the maternal role in the Compson household, she soon learns that she must reject the surrogate motherhood she has embraced in order to escape the Compson "curse." Caddy believes that she has already corrupted the family with her pregnancy; she is diseased with the Compson curse. Quentin discovers Caddy with Herbert and begins to yell at her, demanding that Caddy tell him if she loves Herbert or not. Caddy condemns her own sexual behavior: "I am dont cry Im bad anyway you cant help it [Quentin replies] there's a curse on us its not our fault is it our fault" (158). Both Caddy and Quentin

assume that the only way to escape the curse is to flee from the house, from the family. Caddy literally flees from the household on her wedding day:

> Only she was running already . . . In the mirror she was running before I knew what it was. That quick her train caught up over her arm she ran out of the mirror like a cloud, her veil swirling . . . fast clutching her dress onto her shoulder with the other hand, running. . . (81)

Faulkner allows the reader to observe Caddy and her wedding only through the distorted eyes of Benjy and Quentin, who are both drunk on "sassprilluh" at the time. Thus, the reader is not even permitted to see Caddy escape from her family; we receive a distorted image, a "mirrored" version of Caddy. Bleikasten explains that "What lingers in the memory is at best the reflection of a reflection" (77). This "reflection of a reflection" is the only way Caddy can leave her family. She must make herself invisible in order to flee without upsetting her brothers or mother.

Her wedding to Herbert is an escape and potentially a salvation of self. Since Caroline and Jason senior have always prevented her from making her own decisions, Caddy is ready to leave the house and even her beloved Benjy in

order to begin her own life: "She stopped again, against the wall looking at me [Benjy] and I cried and she went on and I came on, crying, and she shrank against the wall . . ." (69). However, like Quentin, who commits suicide after leaving the Compson household, Caddy discovers that the Compson curse follows her. The curse crosses generations, passing onto Caddy's daughter, Quentin.

Divorcing Herbert, Caddy abandons Quentin because she believes that Jason can be a better provider for her daughter than she can. Despite the fact that Caddy does not rear Quentin herself, her abandonment of her daughter to the Compson household makes Quentin vulnerable to the male-dominated, stifling atmosphere that poisoned Caddy's own childhood. Brooks observes that "The girl Quentin's family environment is much worse than what her mother's had been" (63). Jason domineers over all the members of the Compson house, dictating everyone's life, and Caroline continues to control Jason, expressing herself through his verbal, emotional, and physical violence. For example, in the coffee scene at the beginning of the third section, Dilsey strives to protect Quentin, who has been skipping school, from Jason's wrath. Jason stops abusing Quentin when Caroline approaches: "Then I heard Mother on the

stairs. I might have known she wasn't going to keep out of it. I let go" (185). He still behaves like a little boy, afraid to be caught misbehaving by his mother. Here it is evident that Caroline is not the only one responsible for Jason's cruelty; it comes from something within Jason. His role is to protect his mother from harm and also tell on anyone who he thinks does wrong. Yet, Caroline does exert control over Quentin's rearing by insistently striving to make her unlike Caddy: "'But she must never know. She must never even learn that name . . . If she could grow up never to know that she had a mother, I would thank God'" (199). Quentin, like her mother, is forced to live by lying.

Like Caddy, Quentin deceitfully seeks out the company of men because Jason and Caroline would never permit her to express herself openly. Caddy had to hide her boyfriends from the family in order to avoid being considered a harlot, and Quentin experiences the same oppression. Jason and Caroline are determined to keep the family's reputation clean, even though it is clearly tainted. Caroline and Jason care more about superficial matters than about their family. Like Caddy, Quentin threatens Caroline and Jason's standing in the community. This is evident in Jason's

foolish obsession with chasing Quentin and the boy wearing the red tie around town: "Me, without any hat, in the middle of the afternoon, having to chase up and down back alleys because of my mother's good name" (232). No hat means he is not dressed with fitting decorum, in a gentlemanly fashion. Jason worries about how he looks to the members of the town, but still remains obsessive about his determination to catch Quentin. Quentin, on the other hand, is running around with the boy wearing a red tie, a carnie. Although Caroline and Jason see Quentin as a disgrace to the family, their destructive influence has impelled Quentin to associate promiscuously with an evidently disreputable character. Although Jason and Caroline view Quentin as immoral, and she is admittedly promiscuous, Faulkner portrays her as struggling to free herself from their cruelty and repression.

Although Jason hinders the communication between Caddy and Quentin, both women struggle against his tyranny in order to remain connected to each other. Caddy and Quentin receive distorted views of each other because of Jason's interference. Despite Jason's obsession with separating Quentin from Caddy, she still desires to have her mother in her life: "Dilsey, I want my mother" (185). In spite of

the fact that she has been estranged from her mother for over sixteen years, Quentin tries to remain connected to Caddy. Admittedly, Quentin occasionally exploits her mother's name to gain sympathy from Dilsey or Jason, but she realizes that her mother, and Caddy's money, is the only possibility she has for escaping from an unendurable situation.

Quentin's estrangement from her mother still influences her life. She realizes that she needs her mother in order to escape from Caroline and Jason's authority. For example, Jason teases Quentin with a letter and a money order Caddy sends. Because he wants to pocket Caddy's money for himself, he is unwilling to permit Quentin to see that the money order is for fifty dollars. Jason steals the money sent by Caddy, and the only link between Caddy and her daughter is severed by Jason and Caroline, who thinks she is burning each of Caddy's checks. Although Caddy relinquishes Quentin to her mother and brother, she still tries to remain in touch with her daughter. Other than sending letters, she attempts to see Quentin and usually approaches Dilsey, but Jason ends that possibility by "put[ting] the fear of God into Dilsey" (207).

Because mother and daughter follow the same path in life, they share some personality traits, which upsets Caroline and Jason. Caddy and Quentin seem to express frustration and anxiety in the same manner. Jason comments that Quentin's frustration about the money order is similar to Caddy's reaction when he has the upper hand in the situation: "She took the pen, but instead of signing it she just stood there with her head bent and the pen shaking in her hand. Just like her mother. 'Oh, God,' she says, 'oh, God'" (215). Caddy exhibits the same behavior when Jason manipulates her. Longing to see her daughter, Caddy pays Jason one hundred dollars. However, Jason cheats her by only allowing Caddy to briefly glimpse the baby Quentin outside the window of a speeding carriage. Caddy reacts to Jason's devious actions the way Quentin does later: "She just stood there, looking at me, twisting her hands together. 'Damn you,' she says. 'Damn you'" (206). In both circumstances, Jason takes sadistic pleasure in hurting a helpless individual. Other little similarities, such as the fact that both Quentin and Caddy sleep in the same room as children, emphasize the connection between mother and daughter. Caroline even thinks that if baby Quentin does sleep in the same room, Quentin will become

like Caddy: "'In there? . . . To be contaminated by that atmosphere?'" (198). Since Caddy is seen as the bad seed of the family, at least until Quentin grows up and behaves like her mother, Caroline denies that Caddy is her daughter, forbidding that Caddy's name be mentioned in the house (199) when Quentin arrives. Constantly fearful that Caddy will corrupt the family, and basically hostile toward female sexuality, Caroline condemns Caddy and blames Quentin for Caddy's fall from grace, her divorce: "'To have my own daughter cast off by her husband. Poor little innocent baby,' she says, looking at Quentin. 'You will never know the suffering you've caused'" (198). Caroline's hostility has destructive effects on Quentin's behavior. Quentin suffers from Caroline's repressive surveillance and negative attitudes toward women. Caroline and Jason are constantly aware of Quentin's behavior, comparing her to Caddy.

Jason and Caroline perceive that Quentin, as a young woman, displays the same self-destructive behaviors as Caddy. Jason labels both Caddy and Quentin as whores. Caddy and Quentin are condemned as immoral because Caroline and Jason's views on women make no provision for any expression of female sexuality, and no matter how well they

behave with men, Caddy and Quentin are seen as loose. Jason remains rigid in his attitude toward Caddy and Quentin: "Once a bitch always a bitch, what I say" (180). It is true that Quentin, like Caddy, has many lovers, but these men perform an essential function in her life, helping Quentin escape from Caroline and Jason's domination. These men give her an excuse to run away from the family by climbing through her window. Because she lives under Caroline and Jason's oppression, Quentin behaves the way her mother acted in the same circumstances: "Deserted by her mother, Miss Quentin is left no one with whom to learn love, and so repeats her mother's dishonor and flight without knowing her tenderness" (Minter 98). Jason and Caroline see affection as a weakness, and Quentin manipulates Dilsey rather than learning how to love from her. In Caroline's classification system of women, Caddy and Quentin would never meet the standard of the ideal woman.

Comparable to the conclusion of *As I Lay Dying*, Quentin's secret escape from the Compson house may be seen as both positive and negative. Quentin is running away from a family that has never expressed affection toward her. Minter states that "Miss Quentin, the only grandchild

of the Compsons, never knows her parents and certainly never feels their love" (18). By taking the money sent by Caddy, which has been stolen by Jason, and by climbing down the same pear tree that her mother climbed up as a young girl, Quentin symbolizes a sort of hope. She is strong enough to flee on her own, unlike Caddy, who had to marry. Furthermore, Quentin is not pregnant, like Dewey Dell or Caddy. As Weinstein notes, the boy wearing the red tie's mention of "Agnes Mabel Becky" is a "term used half a century ago in the South for a three-pack of condoms" (6). It is a possibility that Quentin will not perpetuate the Compson name or its cycle of abuse. Dilsey is the only other female character who endures throughout the family's destruction: "I seed de beginnin, en now I sees de endin" (297). However, she is of slave stock, not a Compson by blood. The family will essentially die out, and Jason and Caroline's abuse will end.

Although Quentin's rejection of her "surrogate" parents, Jason and Caroline, may be deemed hopeful, it also is despairing in that it represents a severing of the connection between Quentin and Caddy as well as the connection between Quentin and Jason. The mother and daughter umbilical cord, in a sense, between Caroline,

Caddy, and Quentin is cut. This separation may indicate that Quentin will not adopt Caroline and Jason's misogynistic beliefs. Yet, Quentin, like Caroline, is also a victim of patriarchal control because she is a product of her environment. Caroline has learned what a proper woman is from her father, and she perpetuates patriarchal rules about women's roles by imposing on her daughter and granddaughter impossibly restricted beliefs about sexuality, motherhood, and marriage. Caroline's rigid views on women and her refusal to admit Caddy back into the family have forced her daughter into prostitution as a means to support herself. Because Caddy, destitute, is also forced to give up her daughter to Caroline and Jason, Quentin matures in the same repressive, unloving household as Caddy.

Quentin, potentially doomed to the same fate as her mother, decides to escape it and runs away from both her mother and grandmother. Unlike Caddy, who possesses compassion for her family, Quentin flees the Compson household in bitterness; she lacks the caring attitude her mother has for Dilsey, the only positive maternal figure she knows. Quentin, the last female character who might preserve the Compson family, terminates the links between

generations by rejecting pregnancy. Hence, the ties between mothers and daughters in the family are completely severed while simultaneously duplicated. Quentin runs away, not only from her family, but also from her mother. Although she is separated from Caddy, Quentin still displays Caddy's destructive behavior and carries with her Caroline and Jason's misogynistic views. Conceivably, she will pass them onto her daughter if she has one.

The ending is then unsettled. By preventing pregnancy Quentin is ending a corrupt and abusive social cycle. However, her avoidance of pregnancy may not last forever. Her mother before her left the family, only to return as a destitute mother with an infant in her arms. Quentin flees her family, but she may return one day as her mother did. The abusive cycle may or may not be arrested.

IV. Conclusion

Faulkner's female characters are usually regarded as victims. Critics scrutinize Caroline, Caddy, and Quentin separately from each other, not as integral parts of a generational pattern. In *As I Lay Dying* and *The Sound and the Fury*, the female characters are generally treated as bit players in the masculine dramas that are understood to be at the centers of both novels. The purpose of this thesis has been to argue that the women are important in themselves and are best understood in relation to each other. The women themselves constitute the heart of the familial pattern.

When we do not explore Faulkner's female figures in relation to each other, we fail to see how Faulkner illustrates their struggles. Hill, Jr. claims that Faulkner himself was misogynistic and believed what his male characters said: "Faulkner has Quentin and Jason. . . assume a sexual basis for the way women are and act. This attitude seems to belong not just to the particular character's created pose, but to Faulkner as well . . ." (90). Yet, I believe Faulkner was not misogynistic and did have sympathy for his female characters as well as his male

characters. Faulkner portrays Addie, Dewey Dell, Caddy, and Quentin as strong women who want to break free from the patriarchal structure his male characters create. In his portraits of mothers and daughters in both *As I Lay Dying* and *The Sound and the Fury*, Faulkner focuses on the troubles endured by sympathetic female characters struggling with motherhood, sexuality, and identity within a patriarchal society.

His novels leave us with unanswered questions. We do not know what will happen to Dewey Dell or Quentin, but we do understand their past, the decadent and abusive family structure in which they grow up. Like the fathers' sons, the mothers' daughters are tortured by their parents' worldviews. Faulkner illustrates the devastation parents can inflict on their children. His paternal characters send their sons into the world with skewed views on women and life; likewise, Faulkner's maternal characters forsake their daughters to a misogynistic patriarchal order. Faulkner shows the deterioration of generations and that both men and women in his novels perpetuate the corruption of their children.

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